

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA  
NEWPORT NEWS DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	)	CRIMINAL NO. 4:01cr
	)	
	)	18 U.S.C. §§ 1343, 2 (Wire Fraud - Count
v.	)	One)
	)	
THOMAS HOUSER,	)	18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(3), (b)(2)(B), and
a/k/a "Ian King,"	)	(c)(3)(A)(Possessing False Identification
a/k/a "Timothy and Tim Hopkins,"	)	Documents - Count Two)
a/k/a "Ian Hopkins,"	)	
a/k/a "Thomas and Tommy King,"	)	
a/k/a "Edward Kingman,"	)	
a/k/a "Thomas Gross," and	)	
a/k/a "Robert Joiner."	)	

CRIMINAL INFORMATION

COUNT ONE

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY CHARGES THAT:

1. From in or about May 2000 through May 2001, the exact dates being unknown, in the Eastern District of Virginia and elsewhere, defendant THOMAS HOUSER knowingly devised and intended to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud and for obtaining money and property by means of materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, which scheme and artifice, and the execution thereof, operated in substance as follows:

THE SCHEME AND ARTIFICE

2. The object of the defendant's scheme and artifice was to obtain moneys by fraudulent means from persons seeking to use Internet auction sites to buy various goods, including jewelry, watches, sunglasses, tools, fishing and hunting equipment, stereo equipment, computer equipment, and assorted consumer electronic items.

3. It was a part of the defendant's scheme and artifice to create and to use a variety of aliases, electronic mail (e-mail) addresses, false identifications, and screen names, to hide his

identity from the persons seeking to buy goods and from persons complaining about goods already bought.

4. It was further a part of the defendant's scheme and artifice to offer to sell and to sell through various Internet auction sites, including eBay, Yahoo!, and flyshop.com, goods that the defendant had no intention of supplying to buyers.

5. It was further a part of the defendant's scheme and artifice to make false promises indicating that the goods advertised and purchased would be delivered following receipt of a buyer's payment by money order or other similar means of payment.

6. It was further a part of the defendant's scheme and artifice that following the receipt of payment the defendant would make false statements via e-mail to the buyer promising to ship the purchased item on or before a date certain, when the defendant then and there well knew such statements to be false.

7. It was further a part of the defendant's scheme and artifice that, after receiving a series of payments from defrauded auction buyers, the defendant would move from city to city and state to state to evade detection by law enforcement and regulatory authorities.

8. As a result of this fraudulent scheme and artifice, numerous persons bid upon, paid for, and purported to purchase from the defendant various merchandise which they never received. As a result, these buyers suffered losses totaling over \$22,000.

#### ACTS IN EXECUTION OF THE SCHEME AND ARTIFICE

9. In furtherance of the scheme and artifice and to accomplish its object, the defendant THOMAS HOUSER did commit and caused to be committed the following acts, among others, in the Eastern District of Virginia and elsewhere:

10. On or about April 14, 2001, THOMAS HOUSER placed for auction on eBay a knife, advertised as a Boker Model 529 hunting knife, which Michael Hadrack bid upon and agreed to buy for approximately \$78.92.

11. On or about April 21, 2001, THOMAS HOUSER, using the name “Tommy King,” sent payment instructions to Michael Hadrick and requested that payment be made by U.S. Postal money order.

12. On or about April 25, 2001, THOMAS HOUSER caused Michael Hadrick to mail a U.S. Postal money order for approximately \$78.92 to “Tommy King” in Pensacola, Florida.

13. On or about April 28, 2001, for the purpose of executing the aforesaid scheme and artifice, THOMAS HOUSER did knowingly cause to be transmitted by means of wire communication in interstate commerce, certain signs, signals, and sounds, that is, an e-mail message purporting to be from “Tommy King” in Pensacola, Florida, to Michael Hadrick in the Eastern District of Virginia, acknowledging the receipt of Hadrick’s payment and falsely promising to ship the purchased knife on April 30, 2001, when, in fact, THOMAS HOUSER then knew such statement to be false.

(In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1343 and 2).

COUNT TWO

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FURTHER CHARGES THAT:

On or about May 26, 2001, in Newport News, Virginia, in the Eastern District of Virginia, defendant THOMAS HOUSER did knowingly, and with intent to use unlawfully, possess more than five false identification documents in and affecting interstate commerce; that is, the defendant possessed:

(1) six fake Pennsylvania driver's licenses in the names of Timothy Hopkins, Tommy B. King, Ian Hopkins, Ian King, Edward Kingman (of 17 River Street, Pittsburgh, PA), and Edward Kingman (of 1401 Loon Circle, Pittsburgh, PA);

(2) one fake Colorado driver's license in the name of Tim Hopkins;

(3) two fake Minnesota identification cards in the name of THOMAS HOUSER; and

(4) one fake social security card in the name of Tommy Bradford King.

(In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028(a)(3), (b)(2)(B) and (c)(3)(A)).

Paul J. McNulty  
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